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THE SOURCES OF STEVENSON'S BOTTLE IMP.

Into one corner of the great hall in Stevenson's house at Vailima was built a large safe that greatly exercised the imagination of the natives. It was supposed to be the prison of the Bottle Imp, the magical source of all Stevenson's fortune.¹ Soon after his arrival among the Samoans, he had written the tale in which that creature appears; and before it was given to English readers, the natives could read it in their own language in the Mission magazine.² They little guessed, nor did Stevenson himself know fully, the transformations undergone by the tale since it was told about the fire-side in remote German villages. Stevenson refers us to "that very unliterary product, the English drama of the early part of the century" for the central idea of the story which he so charmingly made over for a Polynesian audience. With the usual thoughtfulness of literary genius, he has left to the historian of literature his congenial task of hunting origins, referring to his source not more definitely than as "a piece once rendered popular by the redoubtable B. Smith." A few hundred years, and it might be difficult to find this piece and trace its sources. To-day it is easy enough, and it makes an instructive study in the art of story-telling.

The redoubtable B. Smith proves to be "O." Smith, a popular actor and stage-manager in the

which are Wackenroderish (pages 75 and 77 notes). One of the latest comments on the question by Helene Stöcker (*Palaestra*, xxvi, page 24), takes sides against Minor who however seems to be on confirmed by two slight internal facts which he does not mention. The two last lines at the bottom of page 78, "*So spott' ich über mich selbst—und auch dieses Spotten ist nur elendes Spielwerk*" are genuinely Tieckian and smack still of Abdallah and Lovell where the Romantic irony took this form. This is, if I understand Minor aright, something slightly different from the posing he mentions in his first note.

Tieck's predilection for the locution *gefangen hält* is mirrored in the *gefangen hielte* of page 79. Of course there is no good reason why Wackenroder should not have used the term; but I have never noted a use from him and have a round dozen from his friend, the best known of which is in the famous quatrain from Oktavianus without a mention of which no article on Tieck seems to be complete.

¹ Balfour's *Life of Stevenson*, II, 130.

² *Id.*, II, 155, 260.

two or three decades preceding the birth of Stevenson. His real name was Richard John Smith, and he got his nickname from the hit he made in the part of Obi Smith in *Three-fingered Jack*. (According to Forster, he was acceptable, in dramatizations of Dickens, in parts like Mantalini and Newman Noggs.) Grotesque and desperate characters were his specialty: in the burletta entitled *Die Hexen am Rhein*, he played the star part of Mons. Bilrin, a Belgian giant eight feet high; and he was the Mephistopheles of the *Dice of Death*.³ In 1828 he made the success of another burletta or "melodramatic romance," played at several different London theatres.⁴ This was the *Bottle Imp*, the immediate source of Stevenson's tale.

Obi Smith was never more "redoubtable" than

³ Clement Scott's *Drama of Yesterday and Today*, I, 14, 19. Michael Williams' *Some London Theatres: Past and Present*, p. 151. Another part taken by O. Smith was Graff, in *Valsha, or, The Slave Queen*, printed in the second volume of Webster's *National Drama*. For other parts see Williams, p. 143. For O. Smith as a stage manager, see James C. Dibdin's *Annals of the Edinburgh Stage*, p. 351, and Williams, p. 148. Was it a misprint in Stevenson? or was there possibly also a B. Smith famous in the same part of the *Bottle Imp*?

⁴ Genest, in 1830, was unaware of the publication of the *Bottle Imp*. In his *Account of the English Stage*, IX, 472-3, he notes the first performances at Covent Garden, beginning Oct. 17, 1828; and remarks the play was "seemingly not printed." It was, however, printed more than once, perhaps in the same year. The British Museum has a copy entitled: "The Bottle Imp, A dramatic romance in two acts. Written expressly for and adapted to Dyer Senior's characters and scenes only," with a woodcut frontispiece dated 25 Oct., 1828. London, published by J. Dyer, Sen. 25 pp. A copy in the Lenox library in New York has the following description on the title page: "The bottle imp. A melodramatic romance, in two acts. Produced at the Theatre Royal, English Opera House, July, 1828. Overture and music composed by G. H. B. Rodwell. . . . London: Chapman and Hall, "(1828?) 29 pp. 12°. The frontispiece consists of an etching by Pierce Egan, the younger, and is from a drawing taken during the representation of the play. This is apparently the form of the play reproduced in Benjamin Webster's *Acting National Drama*. London: Chapman and Hall. 1838. According to Adams' *Dictionary of the Drama*, the first performance was at the Lyceum Theatre, London, on July 7, 1828. The cast were practically the same at the various reported performances, being made up of members of the Lyceum company. Other performances are recorded during July and October, 1829 (Williams, p. 147).

in this part. His costume is described as a "tightly-fitting skin dress of a sea green, horns on the head, and demon's face, from the wrist to the hips a wide-spreading wing, extending or folding at pleasure." A frontispiece engraving in the book of the play presents the batlike creature in the midst of sulphurous smoke, triumphing horribly over his human victim. No doubt the imagination of young Stevenson could easily conjure up in all its vividness the scene as actually witnessed by the artist.

The book is printed from a stage copy of the play, and was not published until after the presentation of the successful piece. It was composed by R. B. Peake, Esq., a member of the Dramatic Authors' Society. Mr. Peake offers no information as to the source of his story, and so far as I know, this has never been pointed out.⁵ I think there can be no question the author made use of a tale entitled *The Bottle Imp*, found in the first volume of a somewhat obscure collection of *Popular Tales and Romances of the Northern Nations*, 1823.⁶ This anonymous work represents an early crop of translations from the German about the time when Blackwood's was printing its *Horae Germanicae*, and when DeQuincey and Carlyle were doing their best to interest English readers in German romance. It was in this very collection that DeQuincey seems to have published originally his tale from the German, *The Fatal Marksman*.⁷ Last summer, finding a

copy of this work in a Chicago book store, I was started on this little hunt. There is no indication in the book of the authors or translators of the several stories. But among other German writers mentioned in the preface is LaMotte Fouqué; and the *Bottle Imp* proves to be merely a translation of his tale of *Das Galgenmännlein*, slightly condensed and a bit altered in the conclusion. That the story was a popular one is shown by its inclusion in Thomas Roscoe's *German Novelists*, published three years later.⁸ There it bears the inappropriate title of *The Mandrake*. Roscoe's translation is more exact than that in the earlier work, but the earlier translator was much happier in his rendering of the title.⁹ 'The Bottle Imp'

our surprise, in vol. III, we found DeQuincey's *Fatal Marksman*, exactly as we now have it, both title and text, but without the name of either the original author or the translator. The inference is that one of DeQuincey's little commercial asides in 1823, when he was at his busiest in writing for the *London Magazine*, was this contribution to a collection of Tales from the German, and that, having a copy of it beside him in 1859, he thought it then worth reprinting just as it stood." Prof. Masson points out that DeQuincey makes no acknowledgment, in reprinting the story, of its being from the German. It is based upon the same German tale as the libretto of Weber's *Freischuetz*—which, it is interesting to observe, made a sensational success at the Lyceum Theatre in the year of publication of this collection of tales (Williams, p. 140).

It is also interesting to find in this collection two of the tales included by Carlyle in his *German Romance* published four years later (1827). *The Spectre Barber* is a translation of Musäus' *Stumme Liebe* (Carlyle's *Dumb Love*); and *Auburn Egbert* is a translation of Tieck's *Der Blonde Eckbert* (Carlyle's *Fair-Haired Eckbert*). The titles will sufficiently illustrate the greater exactness of Carlyle in translation. I find no indication of acquaintance with this collection on the part of Carlyle, who indeed seems to have wished to include in his own collection pieces not yet translated.

Other pieces which I have identified are *The Treasure-Seeker* (Musäus' *Der Schatzgräber*), *Elfin-Land* (Tieck's *Die Elfen*), and *The Tale* (Goethe's *Märchen in Unterhaltungen Deutscher Ausgewanderten*). *Kibitz* is the same *Schwank* that Hans Christian Andersen has worked up with so much drollery in *Lille Claus og Store Claus*.

⁸ Four volumes. London, 1826. The tale is printed in vol. II, pp. 327-366.

⁹ The Blackwood reviewer (September, 1823) does not share my liking for this title. "Ill-chosen," he calls it; and it was doubtless his disapproval that led Roscoe to make in his translation the certainly much less happy choice.

⁵ Adams says merely, quoting M. Williams: "The story was based upon the German legend, that the possessor of a bottle imp could command riches, power, and prosperity of every kind, at the mere wish; but that if he retained the spirit to the end of his life, his soul was forfeited to the evil one. Meanwhile he had the privilege of disposing of the bottle, provided he sold it for less than he gave."

⁶ London: Printed for W. Simpkin and R. Marshall, and J. H. Bohte. Copies of this work are in the British Museum, the Bodleian, the Boston Public, and the Congressional Libraries. Besides the title, various phrases and sentences common to the two (as opposed to the Roscoe translation mentioned below), given in a later note, will serve to mark this version of the story for the source of the play.

⁷ I had the same experience with this tale as Prof. Masson. In the Editor's Preface to vol. XII of the Edinburgh 1889-90 edition of DeQuincey, Professor Masson writes: "Having looked by mere accident into an anonymous . . . collection of 'Popular Tales and Romances,' . . . there, to

stuck ; and it was on the tale so designated that the playwright founded his piece.

Some one with access to collections of German *Maerchen* may perhaps trace the kernel of Fouqué's story to some popular tale or tradition.¹⁰ Meanwhile it is interesting to follow the transformations of the story from Fouqué's version to the Samoan form.

The German tale relates how, during the Thirty Years War, a young German merchant, visiting Venice, is led to spend all his substance in riotous living. Among the revellers, is a Spanish captain, not so gay as the others. When Richard's money fails, the Spaniard draws him aside, and makes him a surprising offer,—an offer, namely, of the power of procuring as much money as he may desire. "I know not whether you are acquainted with a certain little creature, which they call a mandrake (*Galgenmännlein*). It is a very diminutive black looking imp, enclosed in a vial. Whoever possesses one of these creatures may by its means obtain whatever is most desirable in life, particularly an unbounded quantity of money. In return the Mandrake requires the soul of the possessor for his master Lucifer, provided he dies without having transferred the Mandrake into other hands. This can only be done by selling it, and that too for a smaller sum than the possessor himself has given for it. Mine cost me ten ducats, and if you will give me nine for it, 'tis yours."¹¹ After some debate, Richard consents to purchase the talisman for five ducats, and proceeds at once to prove its magic. With its assistance, he continues his life

of extravagant dissipation, in company with a Venetian bona roba named Lucretia. When reproached for his abandoned life, he exclaims, "Richard is my name, and my riches are so boundless that no expense in the world can exhaust them." (*"Reichard ist mein Name, und mein Reichtum ist so hart, dass ihm keine Ausgabe den Kopf einzustossen vermag."*) One remarkable property of the bottle is that, as often as it is thrown away, it returns to its owner, as the stones removed from Arthur's cairn returned to their proper place. This was proved one day when Lucretia threw it into a brook, and Richard shortly after found it in his pocket.

Richard is at length overcome with sickness, the result of his dissipations ; and while in a feverish state, he seems to see the impish vial dancing among the other medicine bottles near his bed. The imp is then heard singing a song of triumph over his victim. He begins to grow suddenly long and thin ; he crawls out of the bottle, and stretches his loathesome body upon that of Richard, like an incubus. Finally Richard wakes, sweating, to see a horrid black toad running into the bed clothes. He has had enough of the bottle imp, and proceeds to palm it off on his doctor for a *lusus naturae*. The doctor, however, soon discovers his bad bargain, and manages to sell the imp back to Richard by a ruse of his own. Similarly the imp is sold to Lucretia, but returns to poor Richard again. He now determines to seek another district in the effort to get rid of his unhappy wares. He goes to Rome, and lives sumptuously there, but is unable to find a purchaser. He enlists in the wars as a captain, and succeeds in selling the imp ; but he buys it back once more by mistake, paying for it now a farthing (heller), the coin of lowest known denomination. His soul is now beyond hope of salvation unless he can get some one to take his wares for a half-farthing. Everywhere he begs this boon with frantic insistence, until he comes to be known as the crazy half-farthing (*der tolle Halbheller*).

The conclusion displays all the grotesquerie of German supernatural romance. Richard is finally saved by a giant in blood red dress, mounted on a wild black horse, whom he meets at the horrible Black Fountain. This is an inky well in a valley reached through a darksome cave with withered

¹⁰ One thinks of the Devil on Two Sticks (*Diable boiteux*), the *Peau de Chagrin*, and the imprisoned djinn of the *Arabian Nights* ; but these do not take us far. (One may begin the search by consulting the notes to Grimm No. 99.)

¹¹ Quoted from Roscoe's translation. The other translation follows the text with almost the same fidelity, but differs in many details of phraseology, the play always agreeing with this anonymous version. The following sentence, for example, is exactly reproduced in the play. "I know not whether you are acquainted with certain little spirits, that are called bottle imps." Again, "Whoever possesses one of these (Bottle Imps) can command from it whatever worldly possessions he desires most." Both quotations from Act I, scene iv. The play and the anonymous translation agree in the un-English expression, "a less sum" for the "smaller sum" of Roscoe.

cypresses before its mouth in the manner of Boecklin. "It was as if the two cypresses were dried up with fright over the hateful gulf." There every Friday the giant washes himself in contempt of his creator. He is bound to the devil for 100,000 gold pieces per year; but this he finds insufficient for his needs, and he desires the unlimited supply of coin offered by the bottle imp. Moreover, being already damned beyond hope himself, he is glad to cheat the devil, and save the soul of Richard. Him he directs to a prince whose money has so depreciated in value that three of his farthings will exchange for but one good coin. And with one of these base coins he buys the bottle imp, and disappears walking up the cliffs like a fly.¹² Richard is now quite ready for reform. He marries a good woman, and is able, generations later, to tell his grandchildren the moral tale of the bottle imp.

An ideal subject for one of the musical melodramas that held the London stage in the 20's and 30's. Mr. Peake has summoned to his assistance the musical genius of Mr. Rodwell; and has arranged in his play some effective scenes for "O" Smith and his fellow-actors. Lucretia keeps her part and name. Richard is renamed Albert, with a loss of the German pun. He is given a servant Willibald, for the benefit of Mr. Keeley, the actor of character parts. This droll Dutchman makes a great deal of fun for the groundlings with his frequent allusions to his native village of Schlauchenhäuser and to his uncle Schwellinbogel's bagpipes. He is made major domo of his master's sumptuous household, and is given a comic scene or two with those "merry devils," as he supposes them, the servants. A notion of the quality may be had from the following bit of dialogue between Willibald and Lucretia's maid Phillippa:

"*Phi.* You look admirably in your new dress, signor.

¹² In the anonymous translation, the conclusion has been slightly altered "so as to render it more satisfactory." A hollow voice from the Black Fountain announces that "Now then are all our labours frustrated, for he who while doomed to destruction could attempt the rescue of another may even yet be saved himself." But as the playwright has given an entirely new turn to the conclusion, this variation does not affect the form of the story in the play.

Wil. Flattery—many a man is seduced by flattery. But I won't be—tempting little devil, too—

Phi. You like our dwelling-place?

Wil. Your dwelling-place? never was there, thank mercy (*aside*) her dwelling-place.

Phi. Ah, signor, my mistress is very much attached to your master; (*mysteriously*) if I thought no one was near, I could unfold a tale.

Wil. (*aside*) Unfold her tail! No, no; remain as you are—no, don't unfold."

A whole new set of characters is introduced in the play in order to get the hero properly married in the end. These are the family of Marcellia, a maiden who has been betrayed by the German traveller. She is thus given an opportunity of playing a magnanimous, melodramatic part in saving the life of her betrayer.

Particularly clever is the way the playwright disposes of the bottle in the end. The nameless and fairly innocent Spanish officer of the German story has become a Nicola, a necromancer, whose many crimes and intimate knowledge of the black arts, set forth prominently at the start, make him a proper scapegoat. In the end, he is arrested by the ecclesiastical authorities and shut up in the prison of the Inquisition. The prison takes fire, and troops are summoned to guard the prisoners. German Albert, now a Venetian officer, is in command. In the midst of a lurid scene, aptly suggesting the destined torments of hell, thirsting Nicola begs for something to drink; and in his desperation, he buys back the fatal bottle with a coin of the lowest value in the world. Thereupon appears the fiend, seizes his victim "by the hair of the head," and they sink in a shower of fire, orchestra playing with doleful fury. Morality play come back to the London stage!

This then was the form of the story known to Stevenson, the suggestion for his *Bottle Imp*. The playwright had certainly used his materials with freedom, and turned out a series of scenes well adapted to the talents of the actors and the taste of the time. Mr. Williams still speaks with warmth, in 1883, of the enthusiasm aroused by this play. A far greater transformation the tale has undergone in the hands of Stevenson, till there remains scarcely anything but the original kernel of the

bottle imp. And yet it is interesting to trace some of the best traits of his tale to hints from the play.

The story has been given a new dress altogether. Time, place and names are changed beyond recognition. It is an Hawaiian, Keawe, who leaves his home on a pleasure trip and finds the wishing bottle in San Francisco. Keawe buys the bottle of an old man, who invites the ingenuous stranger into his house as he is passing by. The bottle sells for \$50. It was brought to earth, the old man tells him, by the devil, who sold it first of all to Prester John for many millions. Other owners have been Napoleon and Capt. Cook, and this accounts for their great successes. When Keawe wishes himself \$50, he gets the exact sum—forty-nine dollars American money, and one Chili piece. "That looks like the truth," said Keawe. He has the same experience with the bottle as German Albert. You can't get rid of it except by sale—it always comes back.

From this point, with one important exception, the tale has little in common with the earlier versions. On his return to Honolulu, Keawe finds himself heir to a wealthy uncle deceased.¹³ He builds himself a great house just to his liking, and then sells the bottle to a friend. He proceeds to fall in love with a beautiful girl, Kokua, whom he sees bathing. The courtship is brief, and they become engaged. And then at the apex of fortune and happiness, Keawe discovers that he is a leper!¹⁴ There is nothing now but to hunt down the wishing-bottle and buy it back. This Keawe succeeds in doing but alas! the price has fallen terribly, and he is obliged to buy for the desperately low sum of two cents. However, he wishes himself well, and is married to Kokua. But he cannot forget his peril, and life does not go happily

¹³ Stevenson may have had a hint for this timely death of Keawe's uncle from the parricide performed by Nicola under the influence of the fiend, and with rather vague relation to the wishing-bottle. In Stevenson's tale, the inference is that the death of the uncle was accomplished by the fiend in carrying out the wish of Keawe for a fine house. Very gently, by suggestion, the moral is conveyed that devil's help can be had only at the expense of devil's work.

¹⁴ Suggested by the sickness of Albert in the play. But while there the sickness has no essential place in the story, Stevenson makes it of prime importance for plot and of high dramatic interest.

with the young couple. Keawe at length explains the reason for his sadness, to the relief of Kokua, who had interpreted it as displeasure with her. She declares she will save her husband's soul; and being an educated woman, she comes to the rescue with the suggestion of coins lower than a cent. In search of the centime, they sail to the French islands, prepared to put on great style in order the better to "push the bottle."¹⁵ But in this they have no success, merely arousing suspicion of sorcery. Finally Kokua, to save her beloved spouse, determines to risk her own salvation; and persuading an old man to buy the bottle of Keawe for four centimes, she buys it of him for three. Keawe is greatly relieved, and indulges in tavern pleasures. But after a while he discovers his Kokua's sacrifice; and, not to be outdone in altruism and shrewdness, he buys the bottle back through a brutal drunkard of a boatswain. The boatswain pays two centimes, and Keawe is to pay the ultimate one. Back comes the drunkard to the tavern, with the devil's bottle buttoned in his coat, and drinking from another bottle in his hand. Keawe is lost beyond a peradventure. But wonder of wonders! The drunkard will not sell. Warned and warned of the condition of ownership, he will not part with a talisman of such sovereign virtue. He reckons he is going to hell anyway, and he thinks he has a bargain. "You thought I was a flat, now you see I'm not. If you won't have a swallow of the rum, I'll have one myself. Here's your health, and good night to you!" So off he went down the avenue towards town, and there goes the bottle out of the story.

This drunkard was very likely suggested by a character of the play in the same scene that suggested the reciprocal sacrifices of Keawe and Kokua. Albert, now a soldier in the Venetian service, has found a purchaser for the bottle, a jolly fellow named Jomelli, who took it for a wine-flask. He guesses at its contents. "Is it schnaps, or schiedam?" And later he is represented stealing off the stage in happy intoxication. So much for a hint of Stevenson's boatswain. But Jomelli is not the scapegoat of the play. And more important is the latter part of the scene.

¹⁵ Thus reproducing an incident of the German tale not found by Stevenson in his play.

Jomelli and Albert have been gambling. Albert has pledged and lost even his canteen. And so he falls subject to an order that any soldier found on inspection without canteen shall suffer death. Sentence has passed when Albert's deserted mistress appears in camp and learns of her lover's plight from Jomelli. While the latter is speaking, the impish bottle undergoes a sudden transformation to a right canteen. Without more ado, Marcelia buys it and hastens to the place of execution. She is just in time to save her lover's life.¹⁶ And thereupon he is able to return suit by saving her soul. As he turns to look at her, he sees the fiend materialized extending his arms over her head. "Ah, the fiend!" he exclaims, "Marcelia, my beloved, my preserver, has purchased the fiend; never, never—it shall not remain one moment in her possession. And he quickly forces a coin into her hand, and takes back the fatal canteen." "Never shall thy generous soul be in danger; would I were free!"

The unexplained transformation of the bottle is absurd enough, and what follows of an orthodox style of melodrama. But the reciprocal rescue—though on Marcelia's side accomplished without any understanding of her risk—was the suggestion for the beautiful story of self-sacrifice in our Hawaiian family.

In all details of the narrative, Stevenson is his own inimitable self. The naiveté of the young Hawaiian is throughout delightful to an English reader; and the description of his Great House a copy-book model of American luxuries for the island natives. Nothing could be more stimulating to the imagination than the mysterious house in San Francisco, and the mysterious man "that looked forth upon him through a window so clear that Keawe could see him as you see a fish in a pool upon a reef." The treatment of the bottle is particularly good. We learn from the play that the bottle is transparent, and "a small black figure is moving about in it." Stevenson offers more for the imagination. It is a "round-bellied bottle with a long neck; the glass of it was white like milk, with changing rainbow colours in the grain. Withinsides some-

thing obscurely moved, like a shadow and a fire." The German tale and the play offer us a materialized demon of grotesque antics and well defined figure. Stevenson contents himself with noting his effect on those who saw him, declining all the claptrap business of the play. Keawe and his friend propose to have a look at the imp. "Now as soon as that was said, the imp looked out of the bottle, and in again, swift as a lizard; and there sat Keawe and Lopaka turned to stone." The most dramatic moment in the story is where Keawe, in the midst of his happiness, suddenly discovers his leprosy.

"Ever the latter end of joy is woe."

Before you know what has happened, you shudder and your heart stops beating.

"So the Chinaman had word, and he must rise from sleep and light the furnaces; and as he walked below, beside the boilers, he heard his master singing and rejoicing above him in the lighted chambers. When the water began to be hot, the Chinaman cried to his master: and Keawe went into the bath-room; and the Chinaman heard him sing as he filled the marble basin; and heard him sing, and the singing broken, as he undressed; until, of a sudden, the song ceased. The Chinaman listened, and listened; he called up the house to Keawe to ask if all were well, and Keawe answered him "Yes," and bade him go to bed; but there was no more singing in the Bright House; and all night long the Chinaman heard his master's feet go round and round the balconies without repose."

Morally the story is quite as completely transformed as in its outward appearance. Without any of the preacher's nasal tone, it must have served admirably, as Stevenson doubtless intended it, for the instruction of Samoan islanders in the art of living. The character of Keawe is a not less admirable model for being human. His honesty appears in his behaviour on the discovery of his disease, as the author thinks proper to point out. "Now you are to observe what sort of a man Keawe was, for he might have dwelt there in the Bright House for years, and no one been

¹⁶ Act II, scene iv. This incident is based on a somewhat similar one in the earlier tale, in which, however, there appears neither woman nor drunkard.

the wiser of his sickness ; but he reckoned nothing of that if he must lose Kokua. And again he might have wed Kokua even as he was ; and so many would have done, because they have the souls of pigs ; but Keawe loved the maid manfully, and he would do her no hurt and bring her in no danger." But later, though Keawe shows himself a Christian in the end, he does not always prove as honest with himself as Kokua. When the old man has bought the bottle, presumably for his own use, Keawe declines to have any pity for him, not wishing to think he has saved his own soul by the eternal ruin of another. He grows angry with his wife for dwelling on this consideration, the more so because of its truth. "Then Keawe, because he felt the truth of what she said, grew the more angry." The situation is full of dramatic irony when we consider it is Kokua whose soul is lost ; and the psychology is admirable all through this part of the tale. The scapegoat boatswain, obstinate in his own damnation, is an embodied moral.

But after all, I fear it was not the moral aspects of the tale that appealed to the author's Samoan neighbours. It was rather the magic and the practical that touched their imaginations. There is something pathetic in the thought that these natives, after reading the story, could still suppose the gentle and virtuous Stevenson to be the owner of so baneful a talisman.

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THE ORIGIN OF THE SESTINA.

Tradition ascribes the invention of this elaborate verse-form to the troubadour Arnaut Daniel and tradition in this case seems to be based on a passage in Dante, *De Vulgari eloquentia*,¹ II, 13 : "Unum est stantia, sine rithimo, in qua nulla rithimorum habitudo attenditur ; et huiusmodi stantiis usus est Arnaldus Danielis frequentissime, velut ibi : *Sem fos Amor de joi donar* ; et nos dicimus : *Al poco giorno*." A curious point in connection with this

passage, and one which appears to have been overlooked, is that while Dante's poem beginning *Al poco giorno* is undoubtedly a sestina, the one by Arnaut Daniel to which he refers is certainly not. It is a poem of six strophes of eight lines each (with an envoi of two lines) in which the same rhymes are used from strophe to strophe, but not the same rhyme-words, nor is there change of order. I shall attempt to explain this contradiction below. Diez, who mentions the passage,² says : "Dass unser Troubadour wirklich, wie man vorgiebt, der Erfinder dieser wunderlicher Liederform sei, darüber haben wir kein Zeugniß ; allein, da wir ebensowenig eine ältere Sextine aufweisen können, als die seinige, und alle Umstände für ihn sprechen, so müssen wir ihn forthin für den Erfinder gelten lassen." A. Stimming, in Gröber's *Grundriss*,³ speaks of "der Sextine, die von Arnaut Daniel erfunden ist."

Other scholars, however, modify this impression that the invention of the sestina was due to a happy inspiration of the troubadour Daniel. Thus Bartsch⁴ says : "Die Rundcanzone, *cansos redonda*, hat mit der Sextine die grösste Aehnlichkeit."

F. W. Maus⁵ in speaking of the single poem extant from the pen of Guillem de Bearn and of his use of the same rhyme-words in all its stanzas (rhyming them, however, with each other also within the stanza), adds : "und betrachte die bekannten 3 Sextinen von Arn. Daniel, Bert. Zorzi und Guill. de S. Gregori [the latter two being imitations of the first] als eine weitere Ausbildung dieser Reimspielerei." Even Diez⁶ had noted a poem of Guillem Peire de Cazals (to which I shall refer presently) as "ein Mittelding zwischen Sextine und Runde."

Now these statements are close to the truth, but they are mere opinions ; the facts are not marshalled, nor is any induction made.

² *Leben u. Werke der Troubadours*, ed. K. Bartsch, Leipzig, 1882, S. 287.

³ *Provenzalische Litteratur*, S. 27. For further reference to this tradition see *La Vita e le Opere del Trovatore Arnaldo Daniello*, a cura di U. A. Canello, Halle, 1883.

⁴ *Grundriss zur Geschichte der provenzalischen Litteratur*, Elberfeld, 1872, S. 39.

⁵ *Peire Cardenals Strophensbau*, Marburg, 1884, S. 49.

⁶ *Poesie der Troubadours*, 2te Aufl., ed. Bartsch, Leipzig, 1884, S. 103.

¹ Ed. P. Rajna, Firenze, 1896, p. 193.